

New Year, New Challenges, New Opportunities

By Councilmember Rose Herrera

Every New Year, I like to take time to pause and reflect on events throughout 2010 that I consider significant. First and foremost, it's been my honor to represent District 8 on the San José City Council for the past two years. I am extremely proud of the work we have accomplished including maintaining City services, balancing the City's budget, and moving forward at the speed of business. Overall, it has been an amazing two years, and I'm excited about what the future holds, both for the City and District 8.

With that said, we cannot overlook the current economic situation that is affecting us very deeply. I am happy to say, however, that last year's initiatives will seed this year's progress.

Last year, we closed a record \$118 million budget deficit. Though it required tough decisions, reorganized service delivery and reductions in employee compensation for many of our employee groups, these measures helped to preserve services. The most significant accomplishment was moving forward pension reform. Thanks to the voters' passage of measures V & W, we have the opportunity to get San José back on track for long term fiscal sustainability.

Getting City Hall on track means helping the economy get back on track. The Mayor appointed me to chairman of the Community & Economic Development Committee. I look forward to the challenges it brings. I will focus on job growth for San José for both new and existing businesses. There are opportunities for job growth in Evergreen as well. The Mayor supported my vision of an Evergreen Innovation Corridor which will help to identify economic development opportunities in Evergreen.

My experience as an entrepreneur has served me well. The Council passed my proposal to stop putting public money into a venture capital fund that was losing money and instead use the money to spur job growth. This change freed up money to close a major deal to bring Maxim Integrated Products and its 2,200 employees to San Jose.

Bringing new retail and invigorating existing retail to Evergreen is one of my goals. Evergreen Village Square has projects coming online that will benefit the community and secure its future. I was very pleased to learn the City Librarian chose the Square for the new Southeast Branch Library. I am proud to report that we are finalizing the land purchase for the library. As an anchor tenant, it will bring much needed foot traffic to the Square. And increased foot traffic is one of the indicators a future grocer will need to be successful here.

And speaking of traffic! Traffic relief is on the way. Highway 101/Tully has broken ground. The \$23.5 million project is underway and scheduled to be completed in the winter of 2012.

I confidently say that our community and our City are moving forward in the right direction. These are just a few examples of the progress that is being made despite many challenges. Community building is a partnership and we have many strong partners throughout Evergreen.

The District 8 Community Roundtable, neighborhood associations, and neighborhood watch meetings are all ways the City, my office, and community members are working together.

It's a new year with another budget deficit and more tough decisions to make. Despite the challenges we face, we must continue to move forward with one common goal to maintain our quality of life for our community and our city. Together, we can work on the issues that matter to you.

I look forward to representing you on the City Council for another year. My staff is committed to helping you in any way we possibly can. Please, do not hesitate to contact my office at 408-535-4908 or district8@sanjoseca.gov with any questions or concerns you may have.

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